



ROOSTER TRACKS

NEW ST. PETER'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

VOLUME 27 – WINTER 2021

A Time for Everything

The Holiday Season is here again – Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, and all that comes with them. For believers that means that various Scriptures begin to come to mind as well. I'm pretty sure that Ecclesiastes 3 is not one of them, but times and seasons come and go, and this Scripture has resonated with me these last several weeks as I've announced my resignation as pastor and thus a change of seasons beyond the holidays. So, consider these words with me for a moment:



For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Solomon lists fourteen opposing pairs of “times” in this bit of wisdom, and it has nothing to do with helping you plan your schedule with efficiency. In fact, it should scream inefficiency at you! There's no particular order to these things. They're just ordinary elements of life. And as much as you might be inclined to plan some of them, the point is that you can't. God gives them when He sees fit to give them. And because He's the one who gives them, we can be content with them when they come. Seasons change, but God does not. The landscape remains the same even if its appearance may change. So, trust your immutable God, and have the wisdom to recognize the seasons as they come.

I knew that this change of seasons was coming for me and my family. I knew it on April 1, 2007 when Korbin Parker and Tyler Ozanne and a couple of other guys helped me and Mary and our 3 little kiddos unload our minivan into a temporary apartment. Having agreed to join the staff of NsP, we had just



moved from Georgia to Dallas and I was certain it would only be for a season. That had been my pattern since college. Actually, as it turns out, that's the pattern of all of our lives.



I'd spent four years in Texas as an engineer, four years in Missouri as a seminary student, and seven years in Georgia as a Campus Minister. Then, with no intentions of moving (back) to Texas, the Lord declared a new season and here we were – but for how long? After five years as one of your Associate Pastors that season came to a close in 2012 and my family prepared for the next season. We assumed it would be in a different state, but God had another season for us right here at NsP. Mary and I did not expect that. We were not looking for that. But God made it clear that He was calling for it. And what a good season it has been – pleasant and peaceful at times, discouraging and anxious at others, but all along God has been at work to do His will with

New St. Peters and with each one of us who call it home. In my announcement on November 7 and in my email that followed I explained some of the reasons why I sense this call to a change. I won't revisit those things here, though as I've said, I'm always open to a visit with any of you who may have questions.

What I *will* do here is exhort all of us to be discerning of the seasons and to be content with the ways in which God calls each of us. Those 3 "little kiddos" that Mary and I moved here with are now grown adults seeking their own way in the world. I praise God for that, but I sure didn't expect it to go by so fast. The church that invited us to come to Dallas has grown and changed through its own seasons which, in some ways, I only now see in retrospect. And I praise God for that too, but I wasn't usually aware of it in the moment. Your own seasons come and go as well and, like Solomon's list, God brings those times and concludes those times without consulting your preferences. Sometimes it catches you off guard, but what matters is that God continues to cultivate the landscape of His work in His ways.

My resignation will take effect at the end of December. It's time for you as a church to begin the process of discerning who the next Pastor will be, and you can't very well start while I'm sitting in that seat. Also, I think I can better sort through the possibilities of my next season without the weekly obligations of church ministry. The session is finalizing a transition plan regarding staff ministry responsibilities as well as the formation of a Search Committee to start in January. Please be in prayer for NsP regarding those things.



There *is* a particular ministry position that I will pursue as soon as it's available, and I'm excited about that. I'd love to tell you about it as soon as that's appropriate. Meanwhile please pray for me and Mary that it will develop in our favor. Regardless, whatever season God brings *will* be in our favor, and I will be content with that.

Peace, *Colin*

NsP Diaconate Spotlight on Service and Giving

Each quarter of the year our deacons are using the occasion of almsgiving to draw attention to ministries outside the walls of NsP. We hope you will recognize all of these as opportunities for purposeful giving and service. In May we highlighted New City Fellowship and their local church planting work. In August we emphasized Union Gospel Mission in its ministry to the homeless of Dallas. This month we've been drawing attention to our "missionaries" with a brief announcement each Sunday.

On the first Sunday of November, we shined the spotlight on our ministry partners that reach the world here in Texas, specifically **RUF-INTERNATIONAL**. On the campuses of SMU, UT-Dallas, and Texas A&M these groups welcome students from all nations, lead them in exploring the gospel of Jesus Christ, and equip them to be ambassadors of God's kingdom around the globe. There are great opportunities to volunteer with these groups right here in Dallas.

Next, we spotlighted nearby sister churches that we have supported from our alms fund. **EL BUEN PASTOR** and **NEW CITY FELLOWSHIP** here in Dallas, and **REDEEMER PCA** in College Station, TX. El Buen Pastor still needs volunteers (once every 8 weeks) to help with their Sunday afternoon children's ministry.



On the third Sunday, we spotlighted various parachurch ministries that operate in Dallas. **DAVENANT INSTITUTE** is a center for theological education offering online classes that are designed for any interested person from the local church. Our own Joe Minich is a Teaching Fellow. **CASA DEL LAGO** is a local ministry serving the families of Bachman Lake through education initiatives for children and equipping adults with English and computer literacy classes. And **DELIBERATE** collects and distributes gently used furniture to refugees, migrants, and those fleeing trafficking and domestic abuse right here in Dallas.

On the final Sunday of the month, we will take up the alms offering and put the spotlight on world missions. Each of these are longtime friends of NsP. **LUKE & SOKHA SMITH** serve with MTW in Cambodia as they plant a church in a village 60 miles south of Phnom Penh. **JOHN & ELLEN BUERGER** serve with MTW in Bulgaria developing the Elias Riggs Center for Biblical Studies and coming alongside Bulgarian families with special needs children. **MONICA JONES** serves with Wycliffe Bible Translators leading or assisting with various Bible translation projects in Africa and southeast Asia. **THOMAS & SANDRA KUNKEL** have been ministering in Guadalajara, Mexico for a decade where they are now planting a new church.

The November alms collection will be used to assist some of these ministries in whatever way they need most. But beyond the collection itself, there are great ways for you to give yourself and your time to their work. Go to <https://newstpeters.org/about-us/partners> and scroll to the bottom to find "Missionary Spotlights" for links to connect.

Grant Clay for the Deacons

Advent at NsP

Advent is once again upon us, and we will begin to mark the season together the Sunday after Thanksgiving, November 28. On Sunday mornings, we will gather for worship and be guided in anticipation of the Lord's coming by the minor prophet, **Haggai**. The book itself is a series of sermons, given to God's people in a time of darkness, yet filled with hopeful expectancy for the future glory of God's temple, the holiness of His people, and the gracious rule of His King. If you were to boil down the biblical hope of Christmas, it would be this: that God's people would see His glory shine in darkness through the coming rule of His righteous King. May we behold that glory together this Christmas season!

On Wednesday evenings, we will gather at the Dallas Children's Theater for **Christmas Vespers**, a short time of song, prayer, and meditation on the hope of Advent. This year, each of our pastors will share a brief homily on themes from a much-beloved ancient text, written by the early church father Athanasius, entitled **On the Incarnation**. We encourage you to pick up a copy and read along with us. Mark your calendars for December 1, 8, and 15 at 6:30 PM.



CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Christmas Vespers December 1, 8, 15
Wednesday evenings at the DCT 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Reception for the Peters December 5
At the home of Brien and Kelly Meyer 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Kids' Christmas Party December 12
In the Children's Theater Gables Room 11:15 a.m.

NsP Women's Christmas Party December 16
At the home of Jenny Bell 6:30-9:00 p.m.

RyF Christmas Party December 17
Location and time TBD

Christmas Eve Service December 24
At the Children's Theater 4:00 p.m.

JANUARY

SoLD with Potluck January 9
Scofield Church 5:00 p.m.; RyF 5:30; Classes 6:00 p.m.

SoLD with Sandwiches & Pizza January 23
Scofield Church 5:00 p.m.; RyF 5:30; Classes 6:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY

SoLD with Potluck February 13
Scofield Church 5:00 p.m.; RyF 5:30; Classes 6:00 p.m.

SoLD with Sandwiches & Pizza February 27
Scofield Church 5:00 p.m.; RyF 5:30; Classes 6:00 p.m.

ONGOING

Session Meetings First Wednesdays
Elders gather for shepherding discussion and prayer.

Deacon Meetings Second Tuesdays
Deacons consider needs of mercy and encouragement.

Men's Fellowships Third Wednesdays
Vector Brewing, Lake Highlands 8:00-10:00 p.m.

Adult Bible Studies Various days of the week
See website under "Connect" for details.

Home Groups Various times and places
See website under "Connect" for details.